

# CLB-15 Gazette

Volume 1, Issue 3, December 2006



## Happy Holidays

Dearest Loved Ones,

I hope all had a Merry Christmas and Happy New year. I'll tell you, we received more packages out here then imaginable – there's more chocolate, baby wipes and lip balm then we no what to do with. Our Key Volunteer Network mailed us several miniature Christmas trees that we positioned in our office spaces and living areas

which was very popular among the troops. My thanks to Janet Barnett, Anne Hyams and the remainder of our outstanding KVN for their wonderful work on this project and their continued support to our families back home.

I wanted to take a minute to brag on your Marines and Sailors. In every aspect, CLB-15 personnel are contributing significantly ranging from support to high risk missions to camp improvement work. I can't begin to explain how big of a difference your Marines and Sailors are making out here. Our focus is to do everything possible to free up the "trigger pullers" to do their jobs and we've been very successful to date.

Every day we have trucks and personnel on the road where the Transportation Support Detachment is delivering supplies all over the AOR. A very dangerous endeavor I assure you as they're usually on the road from sun up to sun down. By virtue of strong leadership and proper training within this Det, they have not had one accident during the 63 missions they've conducted to date. We're also doing major construction projects off site where our Engineer Detachment is fully engaged and has been since we arrived. They're doing a superior job which will make a huge difference in the effort to turn the country back over to the Iraqis. Our Communication Marines are leading the way with comms too as it seems that CLB-15 rarely has any problems with connectivity and functionality of radios and computers. The Maintenance Detachment has taken on the arduous task of doing all maintenance for all units aboard our camp. These Marines never cease to amaze me as they remain ahead of the maintenance schedule and still make time to do other jobs not normally required such as turret improvements, IED roller installation, bunker construction and working on civilian vehicles.

Of course the Maintenance Detachment requires parts to keep them busy which is where the Supply Detachment comes in. It seems if we need a part or item, the Marines in Supply make it happen without fail. The Supply Detachment has positioned Marines all over the country to facilitate the movement of supplies to our location

which has proven to be critical to the MEU's success. CLB-15 Military Police are significantly engaged on a daily basis whether it's protecting the MEU Commander or providing security for vehicles on the road, they have conducted themselves with professionalism and vigor. Daily sick call and dental services aboard the camp is conducted by the Health Services Detachment. Once again, CLB-15 Sailors have performed beautifully providing care for all forces here. HSD also provides Corpsmen on all missions and at all locations where we're operating as well. Our EOD Marines are on the road constantly reducing dangerous IEDs. Their courage and skill is deserving of the highest praise. The remainder of CLB-15 Marines who work in the S1, S3 and S4 are equally as engaged and performing magnificently. All planning, execution of Camp Commandant functions, administration and logistical support is performed by these hard charging Marines. They have executed their duties with enthusiasm, drive and each is doing the work of three.

Bottom line folks, I couldn't be more proud of your Marines and Sailors and feel fortunate to have had this opportunity to serve with them in a combat zone. I find myself touched and overwhelmed by their staunch commitment to making things happen and doing so with excellence. I'll tell you that your loved ones are serving their country with all their might and you can be justifiably proud of each and every one. Thank you all for your continued support from home and please bear with us as we finish up our job out here over the next few weeks and begin our track towards home. Keep the faith and God bless you all. ■



### ***This Months Promotions:***

Sgt Verduzco  
Cpl Alfonso  
Cpl Brander  
Cpl Cully  
Cpl Toney  
PFC Auman

### **Marine of the Quarter:**

LCpl McConnel

### **NCO of the Quarter:**

Cpl Repreza

### ***Unit Addresses:***

#### **USS Boxer**

Rank, Full Name  
CLB-15 DET A (SECTION)  
UNIT 42335  
FPO AP 96610-2335

#### **USS Comstock**

Rank, Full Name  
CLB-15 DET B (SECTION)  
UNIT 42336  
FPO AP 96610-2336

#### **USS Dubuque**

Rank, Full Name  
CLB-15 DET C (SECTION)  
UNIT 42337  
FPO AP 96610-2337

[http://www.usmc.mil/15thmeu/CLB\\_15/index.htm](http://www.usmc.mil/15thmeu/CLB_15/index.htm)

LtCol H.M. Hyams III  
Commanding Officer

## Making Improvements

By: Sgt Evans

The Marines of the Engineer Detachment have been assigned two very important missions. They have been tasked to conduct low cost construction and infrastructure improvement at two separate ports of entry into Iraq in order to increase their level of force protection and improve the efficiency of their operations. Armed with numerous heavy equipment assets, limited manpower, and an intense desire to accomplish the mission the Marines have overcome long work hours and unpredictable weather.

During the cold month of December, the engineers were able to complete all projects at one of the ports of entry. The projects consisted of creating a commercial vehicle inspection lot, and a secure motor pool, as well as repairing a perimeter fence. The vehicle inspection lot will quadruple the number of trucks that can be inspected at one time, greatly improving the efficiency of Iraqi Police operations there and helping to resolve severely backed-up traffic. The Marines showed their toughness as they

continued to work during a blizzard that dropped 4-6 inches of snow on the area. The Marines and the Iraqi Police that work in the area have expressed their gratitude for the work done which will greatly increase the efficiency and safety of their operations.

Just prior to the New Year, the Engineer detachment transferred to their next port of entry charged with the enthusiasm to accomplish the mission and make a safer place for their fellow Marines and Iraqi allies. The next site consists of six different projects to include the construction of a land fill site, an inspection area for outgoing oil shipments, organization of truck parking lot, barrier emplacement, berm improvement, and the clearing and leveling of a lot for storage of seized vehicles. At this time, the Marines have already completed one of the six projects assigned. In short, the Marines are motivated and excited to be doing their job and making a difference. ■



Building an Inspection Catwalk  
Photo By: HM3 Gossman

## Doing Time in Camp KV

By: Capt Van Winkle

The Marines and Sailors of CLB-15 arrived in Iraq in mid-November fresh from visits to several exotic liberty ports anxious to get down to business. Thus far they have exceeded expectations and continue to produce the highest quality results. Although the operational tempo has been very high, the Marines and Sailors have a number of things to do in their spare time. The chow hall is run by a civilian contractor and provides a number of different food choices which are all very good. The recreation facility provides a big screen TV, games, internet access, and phones. The Exchange, while not very large, carries most necessities and several luxuries, including Playstation 3s, which were sold to winners of a raffle prior to Christmas.



Iraqi Snow Storm  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka

During Christmas many of the detachments had parties and a lot of Marines and sailors received

packages from home which they shared with each other. Just prior to New Year's Day the camp was visited by former NFL players Kevin Butler and Jim McMahon as well as actress Karri Turner of the TV show "JAG" and Dave Price of "The Early Show". Time is going by rapidly here as the Marines and Sailors remain focused on the mission-at-hand. ■



Visit from Sports Heros  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka



# Christmas Spirit in Camp KV, Iraq

By Sgt Czajka

The Marines and Sailors of Combat Logistics Battalion Fifteen enjoyed the Holidays despite being away from their homes. Many of the sections gathered to share the Christmas Spirit and be in the company of their friends and co-workers. Several sections participated in gift exchanges.

To get into the Christmas Spirit, the chow hall was decorated with a Christmas theme, complete with three Christmas trees, and two karaoke Santas. For Christmas dinner, Santa handed out cake, and the dinner menu consisted of turkey, ham, sweet potatoes, stuffing, fresh bread, corn bread, biscuits, collard greens, shrimp cocktails, sparkling grape cider, and even eggnog.

On Christmas day, the detachments celebrated in different ways. The S-3 section gathered to smoke Cuban cigars and received gifts from Maj Livingston's family. The Medical Detachment did a gift exchange and later had a Dance Off. Several gag gifts were exchanged within Medical, to include misplaced personal items. S-4 did a gift exchange as well, mostly with military styled gag gifts. LCpl Allen received an oversized cover, while GySgt Fowler received a "500 Million GB hard drive". Communications Detachment celebrated with a theater-styled Christmas Movie Marathon and some of the Marines participated in a white elephant gift exchange. Most of the Marines in Communications Detachment got some sort of food or drinks to contribute to the party. It was

a day for relaxing.

Good will from home really added to the Christmas Spirit for the Marines and Sailors. One organization, called "Operation Home Front", based in Oceanside, CA, sent over 225 decorated stockings to the members of CLB-15. They receive the goods they send to the troops via donations and collect pennies to cover the cost of shipping and handling. The stockings weren't the first gifts that CLB-15 has received from this organization. Last time, the unit received several

boxes of nuts and other goodies while still on ship. The items sent by our Key Volunteer Network helped to lift spirits as well. It was very special to receive miniature Christmas trees that had been personally decorated by members of the KVN.

Overall, The Marines and Sailors had a good Christmas despite being away from their loved ones. Everyone in Combat Logistics Battalion Fifteen appreciates all of the support they receive from home, and wishes everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. ■

## On The Road

By: 1stLt Ruddy

The Transportation Support Detachment has been working hard - on the road nearly every day since we have been in Iraq. They have been doing re-supply convoys delivering fuel, water, mail, and other various supplies all around our area of operations to sustain ongoing operations. LCpl Franceour, LCpl Graham, and Cpl Mite are currently doing missions supporting the Battalion Landing Team separate from the rest of the detachment - out of sight but not out of mind. Cpl Keyes, LCpl Green, and PFC Ely are working with the Maintenance Detachment doing recovery missions for vehicles that break down out on the road.

TS Detachment did not have a mission on Christmas day, which was a nice break. The detachment had Christmas lunch together in the chow hall and LCpl Coyle, LCpl Killian, LCpl Jackson, LCpl Santana, PFC Todd, LCpl Long, and PFC Boeker entertained us with a song they wrote with all of GySgt Allen's most

popular sayings, to the theme of the 12 Days of Christmas. It was definitely the highlight of Christmas day.

Day to day life is busy, which is making our time fly by out here. It is obvious the training we did over the past year is paying off and we already have a lot of great memories too:

drinking egg nog in the gun turrets, making up new nicknames for each other, Cpl Simpson's cammie-netted Kevlar, listening to "Goodbye Horses" and playing lambs, and hearing Pvt Cruthis tell his newest Gina story (that is what he named his weapon) or about the LCpl from the ACE who stole his heart. ■



GySgt Neal unpacks a Christmas Tree  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka



SSgt Zamora opens his gift  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka



Santa handing out cake  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka



Enjoying Christmas Eggnog  
Photo By: 1stLt Ruddy

## Keeping Busy

By Sgt Czajka

Maintenance Detachment has their hands full with many different kinds of gear in need of repair. They are currently providing service and repair for all units in our area of operation. Every day these Marines work on a wide variety of equipment including bulldozers, radios, Light Armored



Checking their work  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka

Vehicles, 7-ton trucks, and multiple varieties of non-tactical equipment. As I walk around the maintenance lot, I see Sgt Verduzco constructing one of several vehicle checkpoint gates he has welded out of whatever metal he could find laying around, while Sgt

Sandoval tests a circuit card for a radio. "Its all about mission accomplishment, though sometimes there is personal sacrifice", says Verduzco. With this heavy work load upon them, they are forced to overcome and adapt to multiple obstacles with different tasks all the time. One such adaptation, was building a ramp to load a 35,000lb tractor onto a trailer. The ramp that was built, again out of scrap metal, was 10ft long, 2½ft wide, and weighed over 400lbs. It required eight Marines to lift it. The ramp only took 12 hours to build despite the harsh working conditions. Between fixing gear and performing operations checks on all vehicles before heading on a convoy, these Marines are keeping busy. But as said by Sgt Anderson, "They haven't brought us anything that we couldn't take care of." ■

## Christmas Mail

By Sgt Czajka

The Mail Clerks of Combat Logistics Battalion Fifteen are busy this month with Christmas packages arriving every few days. "I feel like Santa Claus." says G y S g t Kulberg. All mail coming in from the states, gets flown into Iraq, and l a t e r distributed to



Cpl Dandrea opens a mail bag  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka

the Armed Forces at the many operating bases across the country. Receiving mail in Iraq is often a way for the Marines and Sailors to forget where they are for a moment, and feel the warm feelings from home. When mail does arrive, many Marines and Sailors of CLB-15, are seen swarming back to their work sections, so see if they h a v e anything. Even when s o m e o n e d o e s n ' t receive a p a c k a g e , there is u s u a l l y sharing of cookies or goodies from family. Many of the packages arriving this month, has had many Christmas themed items, allowing everyone to share in the Christmas Spirit, even while in Iraq. Most sections around the base, has some Christmas lights, and even a small Christmas Tree. ■



LCpl Biddle helps sort mail  
Photo By: Sgt Czajka